

1. Abstract of the Program

The Managers Development Institute (MDI) is an innovative, year-long professional development program that addresses the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency's goals for succession planning and operational excellence. The Agency's objective is to prepare managers for advancement into new leadership roles. An estimated 38% of managers in the Agency are expected to retire within the next five years, creating a need for qualified candidates to fill the gap. MDI responds to this reality by offering specific courses and having participants create a personal development plan along with participating in mentoring and/or coaching. Their development plan incorporates core competencies such as performance management, leadership and communication skills.

The MDI prepares employees for future success while helping the Agency to retain high-potential managers and maintain a sustainable workforce. As the Institute broadens the knowledge, skills, and abilities of its members, it also supports the Agency's mission, vision, and guiding principles and values. The MDI incorporates the Gallup Organization's research-based approach to employee engagement and building strength-based organizations. Research has linked employee engagement to positive business outcomes and increased productivity.

2. The Problem/ Need for the Program

Due to the size of the Agency, the complexity of its funding, and the large number of contracts (over 750) its employees manage, there was a need to develop an in-house Managers Institute. There are currently 460 managers working in a broad range of classifications and programs throughout the Agency. The County of San Diego's Department of Human Resources provides an Academy for Managers; however, to meet Countywide needs it can accommodate only 6-12 slots per year for the Agency. In addition, the County training focuses on broader Countywide issues, versus Agency-specific ones such as revenue and contract management.

Based upon feedback from the Agency's Executive Team, a committee was formed in 2003 to create, design and implement the Agency's first Managers Development Institute. The committee was a cross section of managers from Divisions such as Fiscal and Support Services, Agency Contract Services and Aging and Independence Services (which had successfully implemented the Gallup Organization's research-based approach to employee training and development). The committee identified the training topics, curriculum, instructors and strategy on the best way to gain support from key stakeholders.

An additional need, to address succession planning, was recognized when reviewing Human Resources data showing the average age of staff beginning their tenure with the County had increased to the age of 37. The data also showed 40% of staff in the Agency's Professional classifications are 50 years or older. There was potential that people would be exiting the Agency sooner than expected, which required the Agency to develop and prepare its managers to ensure there would be well-qualified applicant pools to fill these future vacancies.

3. Description of the Program

The Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Managers Development Institute (MDI) targets current Managers, 460 total, to expand their opportunities for further professional growth and development. The Institute allows the Agency to actively support its commitment to operational excellence, incorporating the Gallup Organization's research in creating a strengths-based organization and strategically supporting the Agency's objective of succession planning. The Institute builds leadership bench strength for the Agency.

The Institute's educational sessions are tied directly to the County and Agency Strategic Plans, Operational Incentive Plans that establish and reward achievement of performance objectives for designated executive and management staff, and Quality First Goals that establish and reward achievement of specific performance objectives by all employees. The goal and objectives for the HHSA Managers Development Institute are the following:

GOAL

Deliver an Agency-specific Management Development Program tied directly to the Strategic Plan, allowing Managers the opportunity to develop and position themselves for future Executive or Management positions and participate in creating the best place to work for all employees in the Agency.

OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Create an Individual Development Plan.
- ☐ Work on relevant Agency projects resulting in expanded professional growth and development and achievement of Agency vision and mission.
- ☐ Participate in a Mentoring or Coaching relationship for development.
- ☐ Implement the use of the 12 questions from Gallup Leadership Philosophy to ensure organizational and operational excellence.

Year-long Development Institute

Special Projects are required for each of the participating managers in order to develop or enhance their core competencies along with providing experience and exposure that their current position does not provide. The Special Projects selected addressed a wide variety of issues, including:

- Efforts to eliminate a multi-million dollar cost/revenue gap in the Agency's Adult and Children's Mental Health Services divisions, through seven separate managed competitions between County employees and private sector organizations to determine whether the County or the private sector could deliver services more economically and efficiently in each program.

- Developing processes and procedures to create a centralized grant application group for the Agency's Aging & Independence Services (AIS) division, in order to enhance AIS' ability to seek grants to address funding gaps and the need for new resources to serve elderly and disabled consumers.
- Broadening service integration into each of the five geographic school clusters in the Agency's East Region service area, by developing a more collaborative, proactive and preventative approach to child welfare services and encouraging new partnerships among Agency staff, community-based organizations, schools and the communities they serve.
- Ensuring County-wide implementation of a State-approved safety and risk assessment tool.

Course Topics

In an effort to prepare managers for advancement into new leadership roles and broaden their knowledge and skills to support them in their current managerial positions, courses were developed which highlight key subjects that are necessary both within Agency's programs and for personal effectiveness. Following is a list of the course topics studied during the first year of the MDI:

- Orientation and review of Special Projects, Mentoring/Coaching, and First Break All the Rules.
- Strategic Plan and Budget Overview.
- Human Performance Improvement for Managers.
- Budget "How To."
- Community Engagement.
- Effective Interpersonal Communications, Myers Briggs Type Indicator, and Managing across Generations.
- Contract Management.
- HR Performance Management, Coaching and Mentoring.
- Fund Balance/Close Out.
- Legislative Analysis/Political Acumen.
- Legal and Ethical Standards and Issues.
- Presentations on Special Projects/Graduation.

Gallup Organization “12 Questions”

For over three decades, The Gallup Organization has provided organizations with statistically proven and extremely effective solutions to find, hire, and develop an engaged workforce. Gallup’s 12 questions (Q12) are designed to measure the strength of the corporate culture at the work unit level. Through the research of Gallup’s Q12, it was found that placing the right person for the right job results in a more productive organization. Employees and managers who are the “right fit” for their roles are more engaged and stay longer than those who are misplaced. It was also discovered that not only do the organization and its employees benefit from implementing Q12, but also the customers with whom they come in contact. Customers who interact with engaged employees returned more often and utilized their services more frequently.

The Managers Development Institute recognized the value of Gallup’s research. Consequently, it has incorporated the twelve questions within the curriculum. Each Gallup question is discussed in the twelve sessions, one per session; the members are given the opportunity to discover and analyze the real meaning behind each question and then implement the question the following month at their workplace. The goal is to transfer what they have learned back to their staff. The Gallup questions are:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last 7 days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. At work, have I had opportunities to learn and grow?

Instructors/ Program Leaders

Incorporating experienced instructors is essential for achieving the success of the MDI. Twenty-one instructors made up the 2004-2005 schedules, of which 16 instructors were Directors and Managers within the County and five members were external contractors who are subject matter experts in the topics selected.

Mentors/Coaching

Participating in a mentoring or coaching relationship exists in the MDI to allow one-on-one time with members of the Health and Human Services Agency’s Executive Team and other seasoned

managers who can share knowledge and experiences working within the Agency and County of San Diego. Mentors also assist the participants with completing their special projects, developing their identified core competencies and navigating the organization in areas that are new or unknown to the participant.

4. Use of Technology

The Managers Development Institute (MDI) incorporates technology into the year-long program to enhance the learning experience of its members.

At the end of the program, graduates are required to present their final projects utilizing Microsoft PowerPoint. One of the training sessions in the course syllabus describes how to “Make Effective Presentations”:

In this session, participants will learn how to make effective presentations including incorporation and use of visual aids and technology. There will be a review of how to select and design media and visual aids that capture and hold attention. Participants will be able to successfully create and deliver power point presentations including their presentation at Graduation.

Other software programs, such as Word, Excel, Publisher, Adobe Acrobat, SPSS and Survey Monkey, are employed.

Participants are given the opportunity to learn online. A new addition to MDI 2005-2006 is the development of its website. Managers and mentors of the program are required to gather their own materials, such as handouts and evaluations, from the website. Future plans of the website will include sharing of information and communicating online between classroom sessions. Consequently, the Institute has moved from the conventional classroom approach to one that blends classroom and online learning. Increasing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of MDI participants – through technology – will prepare them for the future.

5. The Cost of the Program

Costs involved with developing and implementing the HHSA Managers Development Institute include external contractors, recognition and rewards, and other supplies, totaling \$16,245. Of these costs, the greatest amount (\$11,770) went towards certified consultants (external contractors) who provide specific outlines and/or instruction for tools used in the program. Services of these external contractors were obtained through the Training & Development network at a substantial savings. Fees for their services typically run at a cost of \$150-\$300 per hour, while the MDI cost averaged \$225 per hour, an average savings of 45% or \$13,078. Most costs were greatly reduced by providing internal instruction using program leaders within the Agency. The MDI utilizes 96 hours of formal class time in which there are three instructors for every eight hours of class time (with the exception of Contractors #2 and #3 below). Thus, 83% of the program is taught by

internal Agency leaders. Other organizations duplicating a program like the MDI should seek internal program leaders to highlight program knowledge and minimize costs.

The total cost for recognition and rewards was \$3,602. Printing and other supplies costs totaled \$943.

6. The Results/Success of the Program

The success of the program has been measured through the administration of surveys and evaluations. Prior to the first session and at the end of the last session, members of the MDI program are asked to complete a pre-survey and a post-survey, respectively. Additionally, they are required to fill out an evaluation after each session. The pre/post surveys and the evaluations consisted of force-choice (five-point Likert Scale, with a score of 5 for Excellent and 1 for Poor) and open-ended questions. SPSS software was utilized to analyze the data.

Overall, the Managers Development Institute was a success. Survey responses on whether the Institute effectively completed its stated goals scored 4.86 on the pre-survey and 4.94 on the post-survey. Responses on whether the quality of the Institute would be rated as excellent scored 4.91 on the pre-survey and 4.94 on the post-survey. Other evaluative questions drew similarly positive responses.

Success can also be measured by tracking career movement on the part of employees who completed the Institute. To date, among the 27 participants who completed the Institute, there have been six promotions (22%) and five lateral moves (19%).

7. Worthiness of an Award

The Managers Development Institute is an innovative approach to staff development that can be a model to help any organization optimize performance. It successfully focuses on core human resource objectives: building staff's knowledge and skills in key areas, enhancing upward mobility, assisting in staff retention, and supporting succession planning efforts. The Institute creates a larger pool of qualified, knowledgeable applicants for future vacancies. Having qualified applicants within the organization will save funds for recruitment and hiring and prevent delays in filling high-level positions. In addition, the quality of the training, special projects, mentoring and coaching provided to participants has developed managers so they are better prepared when interviewing and competing for promotions, and ready to step into their new roles when they advance. The MDI supports a strength-based and mentoring organizational culture, with individuals who were mentored in turn making a commitment to mentor others. And, by raising the expectations that all managers provide development coaching to all direct reports, it enhances the work environment for every employee.